



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District

# Information Paper

## Environmental Protection: Mississippi River, Spring Lake Islands, Buffalo City, Wis



*Spring Lake in Pool 5 of the Mississippi River, Buffalo City, Wisconsin.*

### Contact

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### Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program (EMP), the Spring Lake site is a 300-acre backwater lake located on the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River in pool 5, at the south end of Buffalo City, Wisconsin. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Natural islands along the west side of Spring Lake have eroded and many have disappeared since the creation of pool 5. Previously, these islands protected the lake from the effects of the main river channel and served to reduce wind fetch and the associated wave action. Loss of the islands is degrading the shallow water fish and wildlife habitat in the lake because of higher turbidity levels and undesirable conditions for aquatic plant beds. Quiet, protected areas are valuable for fish and wildlife habitat. Aquatic plant beds provide a valuable food source for fish and migrating birds. The proposed project would build islands along the west side of the lake and within the lake to restore habitat and diversity in the lake. The islands would be built with material dredged from the vicinity. The project would slow the continued degradation of about 200 acres of valuable backwater fish and wildlife habitat by permitting Spring Lake to be maintained as a protected, shallow backwater for high productivity of both fish and wildlife. The project would directly affect two-thirds of the lake. Material would be dredged from Spring Lake for island fill and topsoil, creating deeper areas for additional fish habitat.

### Status

General design for the project began in 1995, but was delayed because of lack of funds. General design has resumed and a draft Definite Project Report is scheduled to be available in 2001. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2002.

### Authority

The Spring Lake Islands Habitat Project is being planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program (EMP). The EMP was authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, and reauthorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1999.

The project is being planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources, and local interests.

### Fiscal

Project design and construction costs are 100 percent Federal because the project is located on national wildlife refuge lands. Operation and maintenance costs are 100 percent Federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal Cost	\$2,930,000
Non-Federal Cost	\$0
Total Estimated Cost	\$2,930,000